Kargil National Highway

*347. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Kargil National Highway close to the Indo-Pak border and a 'life line' between ladakh and rest of the country is exposed to direct Pak's artillery guns and that there has been intermittent firing by Pakistan on the highway; and

(b) if so what measures have been taken by Government to meet any eventuality?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Some stretches of the road (National Highway 1-A) are exposed to Pak fire. The following steps are being taken to meet any eventuality:—

(i) Local by-passes and walls have been planned along these stretches where Pak fire is effective, part of the work has since been completed.

(ii) The movement of supply convoys and other vehicular traffic is regulated by the Army so as to avoid any mishap.

(iii) A major by-pass along Dras-Umbala-Sankhu-Kargil has been planned. Six kms. have already been completed.

The Indian Army responds appropriately to any firing initiated by Pakistan. Enemy weapon systems are suppressed/ neutralised by effective fire from our guns. Further, with a view to protecting the civilian population the civil administration provides shelters and bunkers under various schemes.

Coal requirement of MSEB

*348. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Coal India subsidiary Western Coalfields Ltd. (WCL) is not in a position to meet the coal requirement of MSEB from 20001-02 onward as per press report in the financial express, dated the 4th August, 1998, captioned "MSEB urged to tap other sources of Coal"; and

(b) if so, the details of steps taken/ proposed to augment production of Coal by WCL to keep pace with the demand from Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) Coal production in India is confined to a few states, whereas, the demand is spread all over the country. This demand is met from the domestic sources by way of linkages which take into acccount coal availability, transport costs and quality factors. Up to the year 2004-05 all power stations-existing and proposed to come up in Maharashtra have been accorded linkages. While these linkages are not solely from Western Coalfields Ltd. coal would be supplied to MSEB from other coalfields like Singareni Collieries Company Limited and South Eastern Coalfields Limited.

(b) The total demand on WCL as at the end of 9th Plan and upto the year 2004-05, for all sectors has been projected at 34.21 million tonnes and 36.45 million tonnes respectively. The production of WCL, would increase to 30.14 million tonnes and 33.04 million tonnes in 2001-02 and 2004-05 respectively. Given the nature of the coal reserve in the WCL, increase in coal production beyond the levels indicated would be possible at a higher cost of production.

राजस्थान से लगी पाकिस्तानी सीमा के निकट बांग्लादेशी नागरिकों का आवागमन

*349. श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावतः क्या गृह मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार को राजस्थान से लगे पाकिस्तानी सीमा क्षेत्र में बांगलादेशी नागरिकों के बसने व उनके आवागमन की जानकारी है;